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# ON INDIAN RESERVES IN CANADA

by M. G. Bowen

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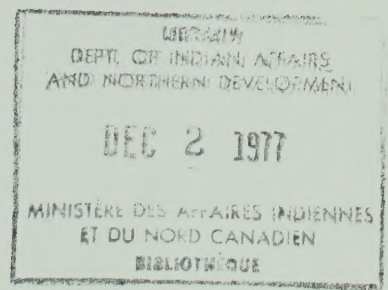
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LAND USE ON  
INDIAN RESERVES IN CANADA

by

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## LAND USE ON INDIAN RESERVES IN CANADA

### INTRODUCTION

Beginning in 1968, the Forest Management Institute undertook to report on the extent and type of land use on the Indian reserves in Canada at the request of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Seven reports have been prepared (Bowen 1972: Dunfield 1970*a, b, c*; Hirvonen 1969*a, b, c*) covering 2,212 reserves and 19 settlements (Table 1). No reports were prepared for the Province of

TABLE 1. Survey Reports<sup>(1)</sup> and Indian Reserves by Province.

Province	Report no.	No. of reserves
Nova Scotia	20	38
Prince Edward Island	20	4
New Brunswick	20	22
Quebec	31	39 <sup>(2)</sup>
Ontario	30	172 <sup>(3)</sup>
Manitoba	22	102
Saskatchewan	23	123
Alberta	24	92
British Columbia	33	1,620
Total		2,212

(1) Forest Management Institute Indian Reserve Forest Survey Report.

(2) Plus 13 Indian settlements.

(3) Plus 6 Indian settlements.

Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories because of the absence of reserves within the meaning of the Indian Act.<sup>(4)</sup>

The purpose of these reports was to provide a sound basis from which priorities could be set and guidelines formulated for forest management and related activities on the reserves.

The purpose of the present report is to summarize land-use statistics on a national basis.

## METHODS

Information on the reserves in all of the provinces except British Columbia was obtained primarily from the study of air photographs. For British Columbia estimates were obtained from a revision of a report by F.J.G. Johnson and Associates (Ltd.), forestry consultants (Johnson and Associates, 1959) up-dated by the Forest Management Institute and the B.C. Regional staff of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Bowen, 1972).

The major area classifications recognized were forest and nonforest land, and water. Forest land was further classified as stocked (actually occupied by trees) or unstocked (including clear cut and burned). The stocked forest land was subdivided by cover types - softwood, mixedwood and hardwood. The areas of the cover types were further subdivided by age class, into mature, immature and young (growth) categories. The nonforest land was classified as agricultural (including meadow, range and crop land) or other land which included commercial, industrial, residential, scrub and urban land

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(4) According to subsection 2.(1)(o) of the Indian Act a "'reserve' means a tract of land, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, that has been set apart by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of a band;" (Government of Canada, 1951).

and that was nonproductive from a forestry viewpoint. The acreages of the classified areas of each reserve were estimated and expressed as percentages of the total area of the reserve.

## RESULTS

Table 2 summarizes the major land-use area statistics on a national basis; acreage figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 acres.

While the largest number of reserves (1,620) are in British Columbia the largest area of land (1,605,300 acres) is in Alberta which has 92 reserves. A close second is Ontario with 172 reserves and 6 settlements containing a total area of 1,559,000 acres. However, the reserves in Ontario contain the largest area of forest land (1,005,200 acres) in any province and more than twice that of Alberta (443,000 acres). The reserves in Ontario also contain the largest acreage (995,800 acres) of stocked forest land in any one province while those in British Columbia contain the largest acreage (34,700 acres) of unstocked forest land. The largest total area of softwood cover-type on Indian reserves is in Ontario (305,500 acres) as is that of mixedwood cover-type (470,800 acres). The reserves in Saskatchewan contain the largest area of hardwood cover-type (268,900 acres).

Indian reserve agricultural land is present in the largest amount (898,600 acres) in Alberta, and land classified as "other" is largest (375,600 acres) in Ontario. The reserves in Ontario also contain the largest water area (77,500 acres) in any province.

Of the total reserve acreage in all of Canada (6,042,000 acres), 44 per cent (2,690,200 acres) is classed as forest land of which only one per cent (72,400 acres) is unstocked. The proportions of the stocked forest land (2,617,800 acres) of the softwood, mixed-wood and hardwood cover-types are nearly equal (15, 13, and 15 per cent respectively, of the total reserve area).

TABLE 2. Major Land-Use Areas of Indian Reserves in Canada  
(In acres)

Province	Forest land					Nonforest land			Water	Total reserve area	
	Stocked				Unstocked <sup>(5)</sup>	Total forest land	Agricultural	Other			Total nonforest land
	Softwood	Mixedwood	Hardwood	Total							
Nova Scotia	Area Per cent	5,900 22	9,800 36	4,300 16	20,000 74	1,100 4	21,100 78	2,700 10	3,100 11	5,800 21	27,200 100
Prince Edward Island	Area Per cent	700 26	600 22	-	1,300 48	-	1,300 48	300 11	1,100 41	1,400 52	2,700 100
New Brunswick	Area Per cent	13,700 36	12,900 34	5,800 15	32,400 85	2,400 6	34,800 91	1,200 3	2,300 6	3,500 9	38,300 100
Quebec	Area <sup>(6)</sup> Per cent	76,700 39	53,400 27	20,500 11	150,600 77	5,700 3	156,300 80	14,500 7	17,500 9	32,000 16	196,100 100
Ontario	Area <sup>(7)</sup> Per cent	305,500 19	470,800 30	219,500 14	995,800 63	9,400 1	1,005,200 64	100,700 6	375,600 25	476,300 31	1,559,000 100
Manitoba	Area Per cent	76,300 14	41,100 8	135,400 25	252,800 47	1,400 -	254,200 47	167,900 32	101,300 19	269,200 51	532,600 100
Saskatchewan	Area Per cent	54,400 4	48,700 4	268,900 22	372,000 30	6,500 1	378,500 31	686,700 55	129,500 10	816,200 65	1,245,200 100
Alberta	Area Per cent	89,000 5	93,000 6	249,800 16	431,800 27	11,200 1	443,000 28	898,600 56	211,000 13	1,109,600 69	1,605,300 100
British Columbia	Area Per cent	277,800 33	64,500 8	18,800 2	361,100 43	34,700 4	395,800 47	235,800 28	193,600 23	429,400 51	837,600 100
Canada	Area Per cent	900,000 15	794,800 13	925,000 15	2,617,800 43	72,400 1	2,690,200 44	2,108,400 35	1,035,000 17	3,143,400 52	6,042,000 100

(5) Includes cut over and/or burned land.

(6) Includes area of 13 Indian settlements.

(7) Includes area of 6 Indian settlements.

Land classed as agricultural composes 2,108,400 acres or 35 per cent of the total reserve area and other land 1,035,000 acres or 17 per cent. Together these classes make up a little more than one-half of the total reserve area. The water area of 208,400 acres is roughly 4 per cent of the total reserve area.

#### OBSERVATIONS

The land-use information on the reserves, in all provinces except British Columbia, was obtained mainly from examinations of air photography taken from 1944 to 1969 (Table 3), and that on the reserves in British Columbia is valid for 1972. Consequently, when the statistics on reserves in all of Canada are summarized as in Table 2, it should be noted that they are applicable for the 28-year period 1944-1972. During that period many changes that affected land-use areas of the reserves undoubtedly occurred.

TABLE 3. Years of Air Photography Covering Indian Reserves in Canada Used in F.M.I. Reports.

Province	Earliest	Latest
Nova Scotia	1953	1968
Prince Edward Island	1968	1968
New Brunswick	1944	1968
Quebec	1945	1969
Ontario	1945	1968
Manitoba	1946	1967
Saskatchewan	1946	1967
Alberta	1946	1968

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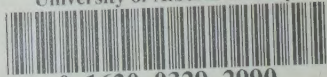
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